

The Impossible Boy

By Nina Wilcox Putnam

Illustrations by C. D. Rhodes.

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—The open road. Pedro and the dancing bear, Mr. Jones, find a tramp from stealing a young lady's purse. Pedro's ambition to become a painter spurs him to quit Old Nita and the striding bear dancers.

CHAPTER II—Pedro, Old Nita and the bear trainers start for New York. Pedro paints a portrait for a lunch-wagon man and so earns a meal for the company. The lady of the purse adventure sees Pedro painting as she passes.

CHAPTER III—New York. Miss Iris Vanderpool quarrels with her artist lover, Sam Hill, and they part. She discovers in her father's desk a portrait which she recognizes as that of Pedro, who rescued her from the purse-snatcher.

CHAPTER IV—Hill, the dependent lover, meets Pedro and Mr. Jones in Washington square. They dine together. Hill discovers talent in Pedro's drawings and in a mad desire to lose himself, gives his studio and all in it to Pedro in exchange for Mr. Jones.

CHAPTER V—Pedro occupies Hill's studio and calls on Leigh, the sculptor, with a letter from Hill. Leigh, calling in return, in the alleyway, gives him a portrait of whom he is, and Pedro, who has been in the studio, is rescued from the purse-snatcher.

CHAPTER VI—Vanderpool's companion goes into the basement of Hill's studio and talks with Ricardo, or Rowe, the basement tenant, of a conspiracy against a foreign government. Vanderpool, ever whom Rowe has a secret hold, is implicated. Senora Dausa and her child, supposedly dead in an uprising, Rowe knows to be alive.

CHAPTER VII—Pedro gains entrance to an artist's meeting at Milligan's, meets Iris again, makes many friends and becomes unconsciously a subject for newspaper copy.

CHAPTER VIII—Senora Dausa is driven by Ricardo up to a resort where the conspirators meet her and profess loyalty. Sam Hill, gold-digger bear trainer, sees Rowe unexpectedly attacked by Old Nita, and rescues her.

CHAPTER IX—Pedro takes luncheon with Iris in her home, meeting Vanderpool, who is disturbed by Pedro's presence. Iris remembers the miniature and wonders. She tells Pedro her suspicion that her father is being blackmailed and enlists his help to discover Vanderpool's secret trouble.

CHAPTER X—Iris poses for Pedro. Pedro sees Rowe with Vanderpool and peeping through Rowe's basement window is astonished at sight of a man, whose face, feature for feature, is like his own.

CHAPTER XI—Hill hears from the bear dancers that Pedro is a Venezuelan. Hill and Mr. Jones wander about and stumble upon Rowe, leading a steamer with contraband of war. Hill is seized as a spy. Vanderpool, asphalt king, appears as "Senior Chief."

CHAPTER XII—Iris again poses for her portrait. Pedro tells her he cannot help her father, whom he knows to be associating with evil characters. Iris, fatigued with Pedro, signs an agreement to marry whoever gets her father out of trouble.

CHAPTER XIII—Mr. Jones returns to his "home" from a hunt for Ricardo. He is told by Pedro that Ricardo, Senora Dausa, who is Pedro's mother, are together. Pedro, with Mr. Jones' aid, finds Hill.

CHAPTER XIV—Pedro and his companions rescue Hill. Pedro gives Hill his "agreement" and asks in return that Hill protect Senora Dausa from Ricardo Valdez, ex-Venezuelan minister.

CHAPTER XV—Pedro, finding Leigh back in his studio, tells him of the strange tangle of events. Leigh advises care in Pedro's relations with Iris and on Pedro's refusal to spend the night with him, sees a great light.

CHAPTER XVI—Pedro returns to Hill's studio at 4 in the morning and finds Iris there. The infuriated woman declares her love for Pedro. As a result Pedro confesses: "I am a girl!"

CHAPTER XVII—The conspirators meet in Rowe's basement. He tells them the revolution turns on his will. Vanderpool is financing it to free Senora Dausa, president's widow, whom he believes a prisoner in Venezuela. If they do not agree to make Rowe dictator he will tell Vanderpool where the senora is and so stop the money supply. They agree and leave him. Senora Dausa has overheard. Denounces Rowe, and runs away from him.

CHAPTER XVIII—Hill calls on Vanderpool and shows him Iris' "agreement." Vanderpool explains matters and agrees to go to Milligan's costume dance with Hill.

The financier continued to pace in silence for a few moments, his white head bowed, his thin, youthful figure alert and active as a boy's, his handsome cameleopard features contracted in thought. Then he spoke abruptly.

"You have surmised that a revolution was afoot? You are right—there is in Venezuela. My asphalt interests are chiefly there. The export-tax, as it stands, would be a drain upon my profits, and ostensibly that is the reason for my backing this scheme to upset the present government. But there is another reason, a deeper one, known only to myself and one other—Rowe. It concerns a woman, who, as you tell me, is kept a prisoner by the row president of that God-forsaken place. Let me tell you about her. When I first took up this business I went to Venezuela to make my contracts. I got good ones, and I made friends with the dictator—a fine old man. He had a very young wife—hardly more than a child. I fell in love with her and she with me. She had a child—a girl it was, but it was being brought up as a boy because the father had been so bitterly disappointed at having no son . . . and Carmen was faithful to her child and her husband . . . I am glad she was . . . I would not have had it otherwise. But we danced together a great deal . . . there was no harm in that . . . Then, one night the inevitable, or rather the usual revolution broke out. It broke out in the ballroom . . . where we were waiting. The orchestra stopped abruptly: all was confusion. I was knocked unconscious while trying to

save her husband. When I came to, I was aboard a ship bound for New York. The president was saved, as I learned afterward, but the revolution was successful and he was deposed. Carmen, I heard, was dead. Then, after a while, I married to please my family."

"Iris' mother?" said Hill.

"Yes," continued Vanderpool. "She died within a year, leaving the baby . . . I was fond of her, in a way, and sorry . . . but I never forgot Carmen. Recently, I came across Rowe, who had been prominent in the affairs of Venezuela during my visits there. He told me that Carmen was not dead . . . Good God! that was all he needed to say, but he added that she was being kept a prisoner, to all intents and purposes, by the present government for fear that the country would rise in favor of her supposed son if she were left free. Now you will understand the situation. I have financed everything. The last boat sails on the early tide, before daylight tomorrow. I have here a letter to my daughter which I thought would sufficiently explain my absence."

"You are going with them—with the revolutionists?" exclaimed Hill.

"I am going to rescue Carmen," replied Vanderpool with a wistful smile.

"And you sail at dawn? Will you not come with me to the house at once, and tell Iris what you have told me," cried Hill excitedly. "By Jove! it's a wonderful story! It will set everything right for me, if you'll only come along!"

"Impossible!" replied Vanderpool. "There are some vital details yet to be attended to. Besides, I prefer not to return to the house again. The servants have been told I have gone away for some time, and I do not now wish to do anything that will excite the slightest comment."

"But Great Scott!" exclaimed Hill in dismay, "will you write out a certificate for me to show her as the proof of what I shall tell her?"

"I heard the young lady giving instructions that you were not to be admitted," said Vanderpool with a twinkle. "Has the order been revoked?"

"I don't know," gasped Hill. "Then an idea struck him, and he laughed aloud in relief."

"See here!" he said, "she is going to a costume dance at the Milligans tonight. Couldn't you go there with me just before you leave for the coast, and help me get a thing straightened out? I know it's a lot to ask, but—"

"But you're not above asking," finished Vanderpool with a laugh. "Yes, I think it could be managed. I'll have to go in these clothes, though. Will they let me in?"

"I'll take care of that!" cried Hill joyfully, "where shall I meet you?"

"Call for me at the Calumet club, at about twelve," said Vanderpool.

"I don't quite know how to thank you," began Hill, but the other stopped him with a gesture.

"I have been 25 years without the thing I am helping you to get," said he. "Do you suppose I want you to wait? Then, too, I rather like the idea of having you for a son-in-law. You'll be good for Iris."

"Er—yes!" said Hill.

"And now, get out, I'm busy," said Vanderpool, tearing in half the letter that he had just written.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Momentous Evening.

De Bush dined at the Milligans on the night of the masquerade, and besides the great painter there were Edwain and little Berry Forest, who paints those fluffy landscapes. Blumau came there, too, and Theodore Pell, who came in at salad-time, and absent-mindedly ate it all, while he told of seeing Pedro at Beer Peter's place, and of the splendid article which he, Pell, had made out of it. And as was the custom of the house, when the coffee cups had been drained for the second time, Bell Milligan made them all help to clear up, and get the floor waxed, for it was nearly ten o'clock, and before long the guests would be going arriving.

Bell wore a yellow costume with sparkling things on it, and ornaments of the same sort across her forehead, and to it she added an all-enveloping gingham apron, while she superintended the arrangements, her frank chaff and the laughter which made her so well beloved by all these famous men, ringing clear.

The dim red lanterns were lighted, the cellar, with its two famous kegs of October brew, was arranged for those who chose to sit and drink to the accompaniment of dancing feet upon the studio floor above: the tiny kitchenette was crammed to its uttermost capacity with the good things for supper, and at half past ten precisely the musicians arrived: a thin fiddler, a fat German cellist, a dapper, dyspeptic pianist, and a temperamental, hungry-looking violinist. These took up their places around the weather-beaten piano, and tucking their handkerchiefs under their chins, prepared for the strenuous time that was traditional of the Milligans' party.

And around the walls were couches, and between them, on the floor, cushions, to serve as seats.

"I wonder if there are enough?" said Don, and without waiting for an answer, darted across the alley to take from under the very head of a neighbor, the desired articles, with which he presently returned. Meanwhile, De Bush, gray-haired, dignified despite his pirate costume, was solemnly sliding over the wax he flung upon the floor, while on the balcony Blumau, the poet-model, and Pell, were giving each other illustrations of the latest Gotsch-Hackenschmidt match, greatly to the detriment of their costumes.

Then the first "outside" guest arrived, a lady in the character of the queen of Sheba. Instantly she was surrounded by an admiring, clamoring, teasing group.

"Am I the first?" asked the lady.

"No, indeed," said Bell comfortingly, with as much innuendo as the question required. And then, just as the situation was becoming unbearably stupid, as such moments at the beginning of a party always are, the door opened to an Apache, full-painted for war. A wild whoop went up at once, and before it had subsided, the crowd began to stream in, many-colored, noisy, gorgeous or humorous, filling the dim studio with a dream-like throng, alive with movement, fraught with the delightful mystery of familiar friends in disguise.

The air was full of chatter, of laughter, of delighted screams of recognition. "Good Lord! it's Bill! Look what Bill has on! Have you seen Mazie's tights!!! Kitty has on a blonde wig!—yes, it is Ken Harris! Well! look at Mr. De Bush, will you! Hello, Pell, old boy, feel as great a fool as you look?" etc., etc. From the corner where the musicians sat, came an ungodly squeaking and scraping. The perfume of burning incense, of new-lit cigarettes, of heavy cosmetics and camphor, hung in the atmosphere. The hungry violinist readjusted his handkerchief and waved his bow; there was a blast of melody, maddening, enticing, and the crowd in the center of the room began to move rhythmically. The guests continued to pour in.

Among these came Leigh, clad in high boots, rough shirt, and trousers, carrying an ax, his coat thrown over his arm, this costume having been created to emulate the personal appearance of the great American for whom he had been named.

After a quick word of greeting to Don Milligan, he thrust his impedimenta into a corner, and began to search among the crowd for the face that had haunted him incessantly the 18 hours past. But although many smiled at him, and beckoned him to join them, he shook his head in refusal, and continued to look for Pedro. But Pedro was nowhere to be found, and instead, in a small room opening on to the balcony, he came upon Iris, who, seated upon a divan, was engaged in warding off the eager attention of Pell, who was determined that she should dance with him.

"Hello, Iris!" said Leigh, coming up, and at once perceiving that she wished to be rid of the young rover. "Hello, Pell! get out of this, will you? I've something particular I want to tell Miss Vanderpool."

"You brigand!" retorted Pell, making a very face, "what right have you, boarding my ship this way? However, despite my newspaper instinct, I shall withdraw from ear-shot. But if you see a paragraph or two about yourselves, don't be surprised!"

With which witheld him was off. "Fresh cut," muttered Leigh. Then to Iris, "May I sit down, or would you rather be left alone?"

"I—no, that is, yes!" said Iris confusedly. "Do sit here beside me, please. I—I feel rather unhappy to-night, and that boy bothered me. What is it that you have to tell me?"

"Absolutely nothing," said Leigh, sinking down beside her. "It was only a ruse. But I'll try and think up something if you like."

"Don't trouble!" replied Iris with a little laugh.

"Perhaps—that is, if you like to, you know—will you tell me something?" Leigh responded.

"That depends," said Iris, patting the shimmering skirt of her costume. "That depends on the nature of the question."

"I have no question to put," he told her. "It is only that I can see you are unhappy, and there must be a reason for it. Now, if you told me that reason, the telling might help you to discern its real significance."

"You say such odd things," she replied, "and such true ones! In most cases your receipt might work, but in this one, it won't. You see, my chief trouble is that I have made an awful fool of myself, and talking about it would only make me more fool than ever."

"Not necessarily," he responded. "For instance, you might have been misled in the first place. You are scarcely responsible for that, and all your foolishness might be subsequent and dependent upon such misleading, or deception."

"That's it exactly!" cried Iris. "Oh, Mr. Leigh, do you think it would be very terrible if I were to tell you something—something that involved a third person, I mean? It would ease my mind so, and I must have done! My father has gone off somewhere, and there is no one else. Do you think I might?"

"I think you might," replied Leigh slowly. "I think it would do no harm to tell me if it concerned one particular person. I mean—Pedro!"

"So you know!" cried Iris, violently agitated. "You know! And I never

even guessed, and went on making love to him . . . her, that is, and couldn't understand why he—she didn't like it. And oh! more than that, I did terrible things; that is, they would have been terrible if Pedro had been a man. I went there alone. The model told me I ought not to, and why; but I was mad—I did not really understand what she meant. And then, last night—her voice sank to a whisper and she kept looking fixedly at the floor—last night I went to Pedro's studio again alone . . . I was desperate . . . I didn't clearly know what I was doing. And he (that was before I knew), Pedro, told me plainly, right out plainly . . . and I didn't care . . . and at last he had to confess he was a girl . . . and oh! Mr. Leigh, do you think Sam will ever forgive me for being such a wicked fool? And do you think he will ever come back so that I can tell him how sorry I am that I ever picked that silly, wrong-headed quarrel with him? Oh, do you?"

Leigh's voice shook with emotion as he answered her, and he was glad that she did not look him in the face as he spoke, for he knew that at the moment his expression had got beyond his power of control.

"Yes," he said unsteadily, "it will all come right!"

He got to his feet, and took an uncertain step or two, the words she had just uttered concerning Pedro still ringing in his brain. The pace or two had, however, brought him facing the door. In it his eyes met a sight that would ordinarily have been sufficient to fill him with amazement, but Leigh was too much stunned by Iris' unconscious confirmation of his own secret knowledge to feel any further emotion just then. But he managed to speak, and the words aroused Iris like magic.

"Yes," he said feebly, "I think you will have the opportunity of apologizing, for here comes Sam Hill now!"

Then they both started hard at the door, where, sure enough, Sam was standing, disguised as a bear trainer, every detail of his costume complete, down to the very bear itself. Iris gave a little cry. He was smiling at her, and behind him shadowed the tall figure of her father. She turned to her lover, her hands outstretched.

"Samuel!" she said brokenly, and was gathered into his arms.

"Samuel, beloved of the Lord!" muttered Leigh, as he reeled out on to the balcony like a drunken man. From the floor below came the rhythmic stamp of many heels, and the tinkling tune of the "Spanish."

(To be continued tomorrow)

COURTESY ALL TOO SCARCE

Cleveland Man Set Fine Example of the Duty of a Gentleman to the Fair Sex.

The youthful Walter Raleigh, walking for his queen to pass, is a pleasant historical picture. But the heart of a courteous gentleman may beat under the blouse of a workman as well as under the cloak of a courtier.

Last November the city of Cleveland, O., was cut off from the outer world by the worst storm of wind and sleet and snow in its history. Traction lines and railways were tied up for several days. Four days after the storm, a woman reached Cleveland to visit her sister. She knew that the cars were not yet running on the line she wished to take, and so she took a car on another line that would take her to the city limits, where she hoped to connect with a car that would take her where she wanted to go.

Forty minutes later she stepped from the car at the edge of the city. Between her and the curbstone a wide stream of water six or eight inches deep was running. As she looked helplessly about, a workman whose hair was touched with gray left a group on the sidewalk, waded out to her and said: "Madam, you don't know me, and I don't know you, but if you'll let me, I'll be glad to help you to the sidewalk." She thanked him, and he took her suitcase to the curb, splashed back, and taking her up in his arms, waded with her to the walk. There he put her down dry-shod, carried her suitcase into a nearby store, and told her he would tell her when her car came; for he was also waiting for it.

Two hours later he waded with the suit case to the long-delayed car, returned, and splashed once more through the stream of melting snow as he carried her to the step. Then he said: "I hope you'll be all right," and took a place at the opposite end of the car—YOUTH'S COMPANION.

CONCERNING TAIL OF DOG

Varying Theories as to Whether Customary Appendage is or is Not Hereditary.

Edmund Perrier, the director of the Paris Museum of Natural History, publishes the results of experiments made by Philip de Vilmorin on the transmission of hereditary characteristics in dogs. He says: "Various breeds of dogs are without tails, such as Breton spaniel, Hungarian sheep dogs and various toy dogs."

M. de Vilmorin speculated as to whether this characteristic was hereditary. He had observed hundreds of dogs made by 27 crosses between dogs of different breeds. "The results showed that the characteristic of having no tail was dominant in the descendants of these dogs. It, therefore, appeared that dogs totally lack

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East Bound	
Arrive	Depart
No. 4.... 7:20 p. m.	7:45 p. m.
No. 6.... 11:54 p. m.	11:59 p. m.
No. 8.... 2:25 a. m.	2:30 a. m.
No. 10.... 1:35 p. m.	2:00 p. m.

West Bound	
Arrive	Depart
No. 1.... 1:10 p. m.	1:35 p. m.
No. 3.... 6:35 a. m.	6:40 a. m.
No. 7.... 4:20 p. m.	4:30 p. m.
No. 9.... 8:35 p. m.	7:40 p. m.

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